



# COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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## PHYSICIAN ALERT INFLUENZA VACCINE

**DATE:** October 8, 2004

**TO:** All Orange County Physicians,  
Hospitals, Clinics and Pharmacies

**FROM:** Mark Horton, MD, MSPH  
Health Officer

**RE:** **FLU VACCINE ALERT**

This fax/email contains 3 pages.  
**Please copy and distribute to  
ALL physicians at your location.**

This memo is to update you on what we know to date about the nationwide shortage of influenza vaccine and to urge your cooperation in ensuring that the available vaccine is only administered to persons belonging to high-risk groups.

### **Background**

On October 5, 2004, CDC was notified by Chiron Corporation that none of its influenza vaccine (Fluvirin<sup>®</sup>) would be available for distribution in the United States for the 2004–05 influenza season. As a result, approximately one half the expected supply of trivalent inactivated vaccine (flu shot) will be available in the United States for the 2004–05 influenza season.

The remaining supply of influenza vaccine expected to be available in the United States is constituted by 54 million doses of Fluzone<sup>®</sup> (inactivated flu shot) manufactured by Aventis Pasteur, Inc., and approximately 1.1 million doses of live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV/FluMist<sup>®</sup>) manufactured by MedImmune.

Unfortunately, because the California state influenza vaccine supply had been ordered from Chiron, the Orange County Public Health Department will be receiving no adult influenza vaccine from the state and therefore has an extremely limited supply.

### **CDC-defined priority groups**

The Orange County Public Health Department has adapted the CDC recommendations as follows:

**Groups to be vaccinated – individuals at high risk for complications from influenza**

Inactivated influenza vaccine should be provided on a first-come, first-serve basis ONLY to individuals falling into one of the following high-risk groups:

- Persons aged 65 years and older
- Children aged 6 months to 23 months
- Adults and children aged 2 – 64 years with chronic medical conditions
- Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of infants under 6 months of age
- Children and adolescents aged 6 months to 18 years who are on long term aspirin therapy
- Women who will be pregnant during the flu season
- Healthcare workers with direct patient care

**Special considerations**

**Individuals who do NOT fall into one of the preceding high-risk categories, *including household contacts to individuals at high risk*, will be asked to FOREGO influenza vaccine in the current influenza season.**

Whereas children under the age of 9 years, who are receiving influenza vaccine for the first time, should still be encouraged to receive two doses of influenza vaccine given at a minimum interval of 4 weeks, doses of influenza vaccine should NOT be held in reserve for the purpose of administering the second dose.

***Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) “FluMist”***

Intranasally administered, live, attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV, or “FluMist”), if available, should be encouraged for healthy persons who are aged 5–49 years and are not pregnant, including health-care workers (except those who care for severely immunocompromised patients in special care units) and persons caring for children aged <6 months.

Inactivated vaccine is preferred over live, attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV, or “FluMist”) for vaccinating household members, health-care workers, and others who have close contact with severely immunocompromised persons during periods when such persons require care in a protected environment. If a health-care worker receives LAIV, the health-care worker should refrain from contact with severely immunocompromised patients for 7 days after vaccine receipt. No preference exists for inactivated vaccine use by health-care workers or other persons who have close contact with persons with lesser degrees of immunosuppression.

***Respiratory hygiene for the medical office or immunization clinic***

Medical providers and immunization clinics are advised to incorporate components of a respiratory hygiene program in the office or clinic as follows:

- Place a box of surgical masks as close to the entry as possible
- Provide masks to all patients with symptoms of a respiratory illness with instructions to patients on their proper use and disposal

- For patients who cannot wear a mask, provide tissues and instructions to cover the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Provide a readily accessible waterless hand hygiene product
- Separate patients with respiratory illness from other patients by either placing them in a cubicle, examination room or some physical separation of at least 3 feet.

### ***Respiratory hygiene for household contacts of high-risk patients***

Individuals with symptoms of respiratory illness should be encouraged to practice good respiratory hygiene at home, especially if they have household contacts who are at high risk for complications of influenza. Such individuals should be encouraged to

- Cover the mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing
- Throw used tissues away
- **Wash hands frequently with soap and water**, especially after sneezing, coughing, touching the face or handling soiled tissues
- Stay home from work or school in order to avoid spreading influenza to others outside the home

### ***Antiviral agents***

Clinicians who wish to consider the use of antiviral agents for individuals unable to obtain influenza vaccine should refer to the CDC's recommendations at the following link:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/treatment/recommendations.htm>

### **Resources/More information**

The Public Health Department will staff an influenza information line that will be kept updated as we obtain further information. You may refer patients to the **Health Referral Line at 800- 564-8448** for information, but unfortunately we do not anticipate that we will have vaccine.

Maxim Health Systems is providing influenza vaccine to high-risk patients 9 years of age and older in a number of commercial settings in Orange County, while supplies last. Individuals may locate a Maxim flu clinic in their areas by going to [www.findaflushot.com](http://www.findaflushot.com).

**For helpful information from the State Department of Health Services, please see**

<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup/flu.htm> , for national updates, please see [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

**For local updates, please go to** [www.ochealthinfo.com](http://www.ochealthinfo.com)